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AUTHOR Deblois, C.; And Others
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ABSTRACT

This paper presents the preliminary results of a longitudinal study carried out in 1982 and 1990 about the job satisfaction and career plans of Quebec school principals, in the primary and secondary levels, working in the public (francophone and anglophone) schools or in the private school of the Quebec school system. Preluding the theoretical and methodological framework of the study is a description of the social and educational context of the 1980s and 1990s. The data collected in 1990 are based on a stratified sample of 600 principals. Usable responses were received from 342 Quebec principals. In both years of the survey, overall "job satisfaction" is quite high. The "general satisfaction" shows an increase in 1990 in every sector of the educational system. The level of satisfaction on most of the 15 job related factors is above 3 (on a scale of 5). Similarities and differences for the private and public sectors (francophone and anglophone) are described and tabulated. The preliminary data suggest that though "overall satisfaction" has increased, the satisfaction on many facets of principals' work has drastically declined. As for the principals in the private sector, they seem to maintain a higher degree of satisfaction than the principals in the public sector. (RR)

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Job Satisfaction and Career Projects of the Quebec School Principals: A longitudinal Study 1982-1990

Satisfaction au travail des directeurs et directrices d'écoles du Québec et leurs projets de carrière: une étude longitudinale 1982/90

C. Deblois
J. Moisset
F. Dupuis
R. Ouellet

Université Laval

Congrès de la Société canadienne pour l'étude de l'éducation

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Introduction

In 1990, the Quebec school system had reached the end of its second important educational reform in less than 30 years. Initiated in the late 70's by the Parti Québécois government with policy statements such as: Bill 40, the «Policy Statement and Action Plan», the integration of the Quebec school boards and the renewal of the «Régime pédagogique», the reform objectives were practically completed in 1990.

A study of Quebec principals' job satisfaction in the early part of the reform movement and at the end of it, is of some interest. Although the reform did not concern them directly, they were nevertheless affected by the changes. To some extent, the principals' degree of satisfaction about their work and their career plans, are clues about their ability to adapt to the on-going changes and to participate in the reform movement.

This study presents the preliminary results of a longitudinal study carried out in 1982 and 1990 about the job satisfaction and career plans of Quebec school principals, in the primary and secondary levels, working in the public (francophone and anglophone) schools or in the private schools of the Quebec school system.

Social and educational context

The social and the educational context of the 80's and the 90's were similar in many ways. For instance, in both periods the constitutional question was strongly debated. In 1982, Quebec was just coming out of the referendum on Sovereignty Association while in the spring of 1990 people were anticipating the ratification of the Meech Lake Accord. There is no doubt that these historical moments were lived intensely by both Quebec linguistic communities but maybe more so by the anglophone community. This situation had some effect on the latter to the extent that there were widespread rumors about the departure of some members of their community and that they were also upset about the restrictive measures (Bill 101 and 178) adopted by the government. In both periods, the anglophone community felt that the rights they had historically held in Quebec were threatened.

Both times were also affected by a serious economic crisis which led to major budgetary cuts in all sectors of the economy. The educational sector was hit particularly hard.

In the 80's the private school system was unhappy with the restrictive measures adopted by the "péquiste" governement at the time; a moratorium limited the access to private schools and Bill 11 reduced their governemental grants. In 1990, the situation had turned around. The moratorium had been lifted, and the private schools were enjoying a recorded level of popularity in the population as a whole.

Bill 107 was adopted in the National Assemblee in 1989 and it was, somehow, the final piece of legislation of a reform that lasted over ten years. We find in this bill essentially the same clauses concerning the role of the principal, that is, to administer the school in close collaboration with the Orientation Committee and the Parents' Committee. He is asked, in addition, to play a more active role in the supervision of the pedagogical activities in the school. If the emphasis, in the past, had been on the efficient management of the school, Bill 107 reminds the principals of their role as instructional leaders.

Finally, Bill 107 proposed the creation of linguistic school boards everywhere in Quebec without, however, touching the historical rights of the Quebec and Montreal catholic and protestant school boards and five other dissident boards. Although these clauses have been suspended for the time being, pending a judgement of the Supreme Court of Canada, the effect of these clauses has already been felt in the two linguistic groups to the extent that they see these measures as a threat to their confessional rights.

All in all, what was proposed in the early government documents of the 80's, reappears to a great extent, in Bill 107 and it seems that principals have slowly adjusted through the decade to the new reality in adopting a more participative style of management.

Theoritical framework and methodology

Because of the longitudinal aspect of this research, we were compelled to adopt the same theoretical framework and the same methodological procedures as in the study of 1982. We also used the same questionnaire on the job satisfaction and the career projects of the principals that served to collect the 1982 data.

The data were collected in the spring (March-May) of 1990 based on a stratified sample of 600 principals selected across the province (200 from the public francophone school system, 200 from the public anglophone school system ad 200 from the private school system). We respected the proportional representation of elementary and secondary schools in the survey

of 1982. Out of 600 mailed questionnaires, 350 were returned for a rate of return of 56%. Eight questionnaires were discarded for various reasons. The rate of return per sector of education is as follows: 72% for the public francophone school system, 52% for the public anglophone system and 46% for the private school system. In the survey of 1982 the whole population had been contacted. The rate of return was then 70% (francophone public), 56% (anglophone public) and 46% (private schools).

Descriptive analysis

As expected, we found some interesting changes between the 1982 and 1990 data about Quebec school principals. For instance, we can observe that the average age of the principals has increased from 44 in 82, to 48 in 1990. Also, we found that the male representation among the principals has also increased from 69% to 73% while the number of females has dropped from 31% to 25%. Although this may be unexpected in a time of affirmative action the drop could be explained by the departure of many female principals who were members of religious orders in the girls' private schools.

TABLE 1
TABLEAU 1

SATISFACTION AU TRAVAIL DES DIRECTEURS D'ÉCOLE SELON LE RÉSEAU OU LE SECTEUR D'APPARTENANCE

	RÉSEAU																	
	1982									1990								
	fr			PUBLIC		en		PRIVÉ		fr			PUBLIC		en		PRIVÉ	
FACTEURS	$\bar{X}$	S_X	Rang	$\bar{X}$	S_X	Rang	$\bar{X}$	S_X	Rang	M	S_X	Rang	M	S_X	Rang	M	S_X	Rang
Satisfaction générale	3,96	0,67	4	3,76	0,89	8	4,38	0,72	3	4,08	0,68	1	3,92	0,81	1	4,49	0,66	1
Travail	3,99	0,49	3	3,86	0,56	4	4,23	0,44	6	3,82	0,35	5	3,81	0,39	4	4,01	0,41	6
Reconnaissance	3,61	0,58	11	3,50	0,60	11	4,00	0,46	11	3,54	0,42	8	3,50	0,37	9	3,75	0,44	8
Responsabilité	3,92	0,56	5	3,77	0,60	7	4,33	0,38	4	3,91	0,32	4	3,76	0,44	5	4,05	0,36	5
Avancement	3,24	0,92	13	2,93	1,05	16	3,63	0,86	14	3,01	0,27	14	2,97	0,24	16	3,20	0,48	14
Réalisation	4,12	0,53	1	4,11	0,57	1	4,44	0,50	2	3,71	0,33	6	3,71	0,35	6	3,86	0,34	7
Salaire	3,16	1,08	14	3,03	1,26	15	3,80	1,03	12	3,25	1,06	11	3,56	1,07	8	3,69	1,02	9
Développement personnel	3,83	0,64	6	3,72	0,83	9	4,15	0,57	10	4,01	0,59	2,5	3,91	0,73	2	4,28	0,56	2
Relations-subordonnés	3,92	0,79	5	3,83	0,80	5	4,19	0,71	8	4,01	0,69	2,5	3,89	0,67	3	4,25	0,67	3
Relations-supérieurs	3,65	0,92	10	3,71	0,89	10	4,16	0,64	9	3,69	0,89	7	3,68	0,82	7	4,13	0,58	4
Relations-pairs	3,70	0,86	9	3,80	0,82	6	4,30	0,56	5	3,06	0,34	13	3,09	0,44	14	3,08	0,41	15
Supervision	3,32	0,88	12	3,44	0,95	12	3,62	0,84	15	2,99	0,51	15	3,06	0,50	15	3,23	0,36	13
Politiques	3,32	0,79	12	3,26	0,70	13	3,07	1,26	16	3,41	0,79	9	3,15	0,78	11	3,68	0,61	10
Conditions de travail	3,82	0,72	7	3,89	0,80	3	4,22	0,67	7	3,20	0,41	12	3,12	0,33	12	3,33	0,40	12
Vie personnelle	4,04	0,60	2	3,99	0,70	2	4,47	0,54	1	3,37	0,32	10	3,40	0,28	10	3,46	0,35	11
Sécurité	3,72	0,92	8	3,21	1,02	14	3,77	1,01	13	2,98	0,27	16	3,11	0,33	13	3,00	0,45	16
	n = 1447			*n = 147*			*n = 58*			*n = 145*			*n = 103*			*n = 92*		

Job satisfaction in 1982 and 1990

First, we have to underline that in both years of our survey the «overall job satisfaction» is quite high. The average score is around 4 and slightly above 4 in 1990: 3.96 versus 4.08 for the francophone public sector; 3.76 versus 3.92 for the anglophone public sector and 4.38 versus 4.49 for the private sector. Therefore «the general satisfaction» shows an increase in 1990 in every sector of the educational system.

Another point we have to emphasize is the fact that the level of satisfaction on most of the 15 job related factors is above 3 (on a scale of 5). The one and only exception is the factor «advancement» for which the degree of satisfaction of the anglophone principals was 2.93 in 1982 whereas in 1990 we observed three exceptions: «advancement» with 2.97 for the anglophones of the public sector and «supervision» with 2.99 for the francophones of the public sector and «security» with 2.98 for the francophones of the public sector.

TABLE 2
TABLEAU 2

GAPS IN THE LEVEL OF SATISFACTION
Between 1982 and 1990

A. Private Sector

	Negative	Positive
Relations with pairs	- 1.22	
Personal life	- 1.01	
Conditions of work	- 0.89	
Security	- 0.77	
Achievement	- 0.58	
Progress in the career	- 0.43	
Supervision	- 0.39	
Responsibility	- 0.28	
Recognition	- 0.25	
Work itself	- 0.22	
Salary	- 0.11	
Relations with superiors	- 0.03	
Policies		+ 0.61
Personal development		+ 0.13
Relations with subordinates		+ 0.06

B. Public Sector (francophone)

	Negative	Positive
Security	- 0.74	
Personal life	- 0.67	
Relations with pairs	- 0.64	
Conditions of work	- 0.64	
Achievement	- 0.41	
Supervision	- 0.33	
Progress in the career	- 0.23	
Work itself	- 0.17	
Recognition	- 0.07	
Responsibility	- 0.01	
Personal development		+ 0.18
Salary		+ 0.09
Relations with subordinates		+ 0.09
Policies		+ 0.09
Relations with superiors		+ 0.04

C. Public Sector (anglophone)

	Negative	Positive
Conditions of work	- 0.77	
Relations with pairs	- 0.71	
Personal life	- 0.59	
Achievement	- 0.40	
Supervision	- 0.38	
Policies	- 0.11	
Security	- 0.10	
Work itself	- 0.05	
Relations with superiors	- 0.03	
Responsibility	- 0.01	
Recognition	0.	00
Salary		+0.53
Personal development		+ 0.19
Relations with subordinates		+ 0.06
Progress in the career		+ 0.04

Beyond those similarities, it is also possible to note some differences in the level of satisfaction with regard to specific factors and to specific groups of principals. The most important difference between 1982 and 1990 was registered by the school principals of the private sector (Table 2). As we can see, for 12 out of fifteen factors, the degree of satisfaction of the school principals from the private sector has diminished. A similar drop can be observed for the school principals working in the public (French and English) sector, but to a lesser degree. Only ten factors show a drop of satisfaction and the gap between 1982 and 1990 is generally smaller than the one observed in the private sector.

TABLE 3
TABLEAU 3

COMPARAISON DE LA SATISFACTION AU TRAVAIL DES DIRECTEURS DES SECTEURS FRANCOPHONE ET ANGLOPHONE DU RÉSEAU PUBLIC : ANALYSES DE LA VARIANCE MULTIVARIÉE ET UNIVARIÉE

	1982				1990			
VARIABLES DÉPENDANTES	CMN[a]	CME[b]	F[c]	EN FAVEUR DE	CMN[a]	CME[b]	F[c]	EN FAVEUR DE
16 variables simultanément	—	—	6,98***	—	—	—	4,25***	—
Satisfaction générale	5,64	0,48	11,81***	Franç.	1,33	0,54	2,44	
Travail	2,33	0,25	9,30**	Franç.	0,01	0,14	0,09	
Reconnaissance	1,61	0,33	4,75**	Franç.	0,13	0,16	0,80	
Responsabilité	3,18	0,32	10,05**	Franç.	1,30	0,14	9,17**	Franç.
Avancement	12,99	0,88	14,81***	Franç.	0,16	0,07	2,45	
Réalisation	0,01	0,29	0,03		0,00	0,12	0,00	
Salaire	1,99	1,20	1,65		27,69	1,15	24,03***	Ang.
Développement personnel	1,69	0,43	3,93*	Franç.	0,71	0,42	1,68	
Relations-subordonnés	1,16	0,63	1,85		0,79	0,47	1,68	
Relations-supérieurs	0,48	0,83	0,57		0,03	0,74	0,04	
Relations-pairs	1,48	0,73	2,03		0,11	0,15	0,70	
Supervision	1,99	0,79	2,51		0,19	0,25	0,79	
Politiques	0,46	0,62	0,73		4,52	0,63	7,26**	Franç.
Conditions de travail	0,55	0,53	1,05		0,29	0,15	1,98	
Vie personnelle	0,29	0,38	0,76		0,09	0,09	0,96	
Sécurité	34,00	0,87	39,06***	Franç.	0,90	0,09	10,23**	Ang.

[a]CMN : carré moyen pour le numérateur
[b]CME : carré moyen pour le terme de l'erreur
[c]F : valeur du test F
DLN : degrés de liberté pour le numérateur = 1 (1982) 1 (1990)
DLD : degrés de liberté pour le dénominateur = 1592 (1982) 240 (1990)

*** : significatif à a = ,001
** : significatif à a = ,01
* : significatif à a = ,05

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Finally we tried to see (with a multivariate analysis of variance, Table 3) if the comparative situation respective to the francophone and anglophone principals from the public sector had changed significantly and if so, which factors accounted for the changes, and if we could observe the same changes between the principals from the private and public sectors.

In 1982, the level of satisfaction of the francophone school principals was significantly higher than the anglophones' as related to the «overall satisfaction» and six other factors: «work itself», «recognization», «responsibility», «advancement» , «personal development» and «security». In 1990, the situation changed slightly. We find that the francophones are significantly more satisfied than the anglophones about two factors: «responsibility» and «policies» while the anglophones' are significantly more satisfied about their «salary» and their «security».

TABLE 4
TABLEAU 4

COMPARAISON DE LA SATISFACTION AU TRAVAIL DES DIRECTEURS DES RÉSEAUX PUBLIC ET PRIVÉ DANS LE SECTEUR FRANCOPHONE : ANALYSES DE LA VARIANCE MULTIVARIÉE ET UNIVARIÉE

	1982				1990			
VARIABLES DÉPENDANTES	CMN[a]	CME[b]	F[c]	EN FAVEUR DE	CMN[a]	CME[b]	F[c]	EN FAVEUR DE
16 variables simultanément	—	—	10,25***	—	—	—	2,41**	—
Satisfaction générale	9,78	0,45	21,79***	PRI	8,51	0,46	18,38***	PRI
Travail	3,16	0,24	13,06***	PRI	1,59	0,14	11,24***	PRI
Reconnaissance	8,57	0,33	25,91***	PRI	2,01	0,19	10,63***	PRI
Responsabilité	9,16	0,31	19,98***	PRI	0,72	0,11	6,39	PRI
Avancement	8,28	0,85	9,76**	PRI	0,83	0,10	7,92**	PRI
Réalisation	5,78	0,28	20,62***	PRI	1,07	0,12	9,26**	PRI
Salaire	2,34	1,16	20,20***	PRI	8,56	1,09	7,84**	PRI
Développement personnel	5,64	0,40	14,05***	PRI	3,18	0,34	9,38**	PRI
Relations-subordonnés	3,95	0,63	6,33	PRI	3,07	0,48	6,43*	PRI
Relations-supérieurs	14,60	0,82	17,77***	PRI	8,78	0,63	13,83***	PRI
Relations-pairs	20,37	0,72	28,28***	PRI	0,00	0,14	0,02	
Supervision	5,11	0,78	6,57	PRI	3,10	0,20	15,51***	PRI
Politiques	3,57	0,66	5,40*	PUB	3,37	0,55	6,13*	PRI
Conditions de travail	9,00	0,52	17,43***	PRI	0,72	0,16	4,44*	PRI
Vie personnelle	10,38	0,36	28,67	PRI	0,21	0,11	1,92	
Sécurité	0,15	0,86	0,17		0,05	0,10	0,50	

[a]CMN : carré moyen pour le numérateur
[b]CME : carré moyen pour le terme de l'erreur
[c]F : valeur du test F
DLN : degrés de liberté pour le numérateur = 1 (1982) 1 (1990)
DLD : degrés de liberté pour le dénominateur = 1503 (1982) 218 (1990)

*** : significatif à a = ,001
** : significatif à a = ,01
* : significatif à a = ,05

As to the comparison between the private and the public school system (French sector), we can see at a glance (Table 4) that there is little difference between 1982 and 1990. In both years the principals from the private sector were significantly more satisfied than those from the public sector on eleven factors out of fifteen with only an exception, the «policy» factor, in 1982. This means that in 1982 the principals from the public sector were more satisfied than their counterparts in the private sector about educational policies. However in 1990, the principals from the private sector showed a higher degree of satisfaction about educational policies. Finally, we can point out that the level of significance in the multivariate analysis of variance has diminished in 1990.

TABLE 5
TABLEAU 5

STATISTIQUES DESCRIPTIVES CONCERNANT LES VARIABLES QUALITATIVES
VARIABLES INDÉPENDANTES ET DÉPENDANTES

Année		1982		1990	
Variables	**Catégories**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**
Appartenance réseau/secteur	1) Public/Francophone	1339	88.09	146	42.7
	2) Public/Anglophone	134	8.82	104	30.4
	3) Privé/Francophone	47	3.09	92	26.9
État civil	1) Célibataire	141	9.28	21	6.1
	2) Marié(e)	1167	76.78	253	74.0
	3) Religieux(se)	123	8.09	36	10.5
	4) Autre	89	5.86	25	7.3
Question 70					
"J'entends poursuivre ma carrière comme	Oui	1313	86.38	287	86.7
directeur d'école"	Non	207	13.62	44	13.3
Question 71					
"J'aimerais bien revenir à l'enseignement si les	Oui	597	39.28	54	16.4
conditions de retour étaient adéquates"	Non	923	60.72	276	83.6
Question 72					
"Si on vous offrait un poste dans des conditions	Oui	764	50.26	163	49.7
de travail à peu près identiques en dehors du	Non	756	49.74	165	50.3
système scolaire, est-ce que vous accepteriez?"					
Question 74					
"Avez-vous fait application à un ou des postes	Oui	271	17.83	48	14.3
en dehors du système scolaire?"	Non	1249	82.17	288	85.7

Satisfaction and career projects

If we look at the principals' career plans in 1982 and 1990, we see in Table 5 that, as a whole, there is much continuity and consistency between their career plans in 82 and 90. However one item shows a major shift in the principals' plans. They were asked the question: Would you go back to teaching at the end of your term as principal if the conditions were adequate? In 1982, close to 40% considered this option while in 1990, only 16% had thought about it. Such a change in a period of 8 years appears to be a major shift in their career plan. On the other hand, the age factor (from 44 to 48) might account, to some degree, for the reluctance to return to teaching.

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TABLE 6
TABLEAU 6

Estimé des coëfficients de régression logistique associés à chaque variable indépendante pour la probabilité d'une certaine "intention de quitter", exprimée via quatre variables dépendantes (n=1520).

	Variables dépendantes							
	Q.70 Intention de ne pas poursuivre la carrière		Q. 71 Aimerait revenir à l'enseignement		Q. 72 Accepterait poste hors du système scolaire		Q. 74 Fait application hors du système scolaire	
Variables indépendantes	1982 (13.62 %)	1990 (13.3 %)	1982 (39.28 %)	1990 (16.4 %)	1982 (50.26 %)	1990 (49.7 %)	1982 (17.83 %)	1990 (14.3 %)
Travail	-0.237	0.503	-0.112	-0.342	0.277	-0.107	0.437*	0.106
Reconnaissance	-0.187	-0.097	-0.036	0.184	0.138	-0.224	-0.030	-0.292
Responsabilité	0.279	0.115	-0.057	0.444	0.335*	0.038	0.251	-0.168
Avancement	-0.222*	-0.169	0.041	0.308	-0.297***	0.369	-0.321***	-0.450
Réalisation de soi	0.154	-0.040	0.030	-0.146	-0.283	-0.400	-0.192	-0.185
Salaire	0.079	0.092	0.022	-0.277**	-0.059	-0.049	0.022	-0.066
Développement personnel	-0.325	0.153	-0.249	-0.449	-0.425**	0.079	-0.064	0.401
Relations subalternes	-0.178	0.074	0.112	-0.193	0.008	-0.035	-0.064	-0.272*
Relations supérieurs	0.087	0.162	0.007	-0.250	0.052	0.011	-0.065	-0.156
Relations pairs	0.096	-0.018	-0.070	0.396	0.017	0.064	0.089	0.091
Supervision	-0.358*	-0.268	-0.064	0.020	-0.049	-0.247	-0.056	-0.402
Politiques administratives	0.180	-0.034	0.185	0.501*	0.042	-0.162	-0.096	0.188
Conditions de travail	0.094	-0.196	-0.056	-0.274	-0.206*	0.027	0.097	-0.002
Vie personnel	-0.039	0.312	0.036	-0.022	-0.244*	0.410	-0.242	-0.429
Sécurité	0.154	0.121	-0.172**	-0.065	-0.019	0.347	0.051	0.247
Satisfaction générale	-0.429***	0.060	-0.479***	0.040	-0.390***	-0.338*	-0.392**	0.170
Réseau/secteur (1)	0.228	0.404	-0.263	-1.163***	-0.189	-0.127	0.317	0.536
(2)	-0.341	0.693*	-0.157	-0.247	-0.294	-0.696**	0.377	0.324
Age	-0.030*	-0.009	-0.025*	-0.035*	-0.030**	-0.008	-0.018	-0.001
Scolarité	0.043	0.061	-0.013	0.013	-0.009	-0.041	0.048	-0.025
État civil (1)	-0.285	0.166	-0.105	2.960	0.041	0.390	0.494	0.028
(2)	0.927*	0.048	0.046	3.812	-0.114	-0.254	-0.583	-0.172
(3)	-0.089	-0.005	-0.464	4.331	0.089	-0.604	0.813*	0.184
Constante	1.868	1.729	4.392***	3.116	5.650***	8.019***	-0.091	8.950**

*** significatif à a = 0,001
** significatif à a = 0,01

In doing this study we were interested in finding out if there was any relationship between the level of satisfaction and the principals' career plans. We find that in 1990 fewer career options are significantly related to the facets of job satisfaction. (see Table 6). Data on question 71 shows (when all the other factors have been controlled) that those who expressed a higher degree of satisfaction about their salary have little intention of going back to teaching. Also, principals from the public francophone sector show less inclination to return to teaching than their anglophone counterparts. Furthermore, the principals working in the English public sector are much less inclined to accept a position outside the school system that those working in the French sector. Finally, the principals who expressed greater satisfaction in their relationship with their subordinates or teachers are less likely to apply for a job outside of education(Q. 74).

In 1982, the facets of satisfaction related to the principals' career plans were mainly «general satisfaction» and «advancement». The more satisfied they were with their job as a whole, the more inclined they were to pursue their career as principal and the less inclined they were to accept a job outside the system or to apply for a job outside the system.

Conclusion

These preliminary data on the job satisfaction and career projects of Quebec school principals indicate that there have been some important changes between 1982 and 1990. On the one hand, their «overall satisfaction» has increased but, on the other, their satisfaction on many facets of their work has drastically declined. If, in 1982, the francophones of the public sector were much more satisfied with different facets of their job than the anglophones, in 1990, the differences have faded away somehow. As to the principals of the private sector, they seem to maintain a higher degree of satisfaction than the principals in the public sector. Finally, in 1990, the principals as a whole are much less inclined to go back to teaching.

These data will have to be subjected to more careful analysis in order to arrive at a final interpretation.